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SUBJECT: AIRPORT NOISE IN ITALY: NO IMMINENT NIGHT FLIGHT
RESTRICTIONS

REF: A. STATE 115832

[1](#)B. ROME 1229

[1](#)C. STATE 29193

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. Environment Ministry officials, in contrast to their previous statements, told U.S. industry representatives in a recent meeting that there are currently no plans to ban night flights in Italy. Officials from Italy's Civil Aviation Authority confirmed that a 1999 Presidential Decree banning night flights in Italy is not in force. The Transportation Ministry has been granted an advisory role on the implementation of the EU Airport Noise Directive. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On Tuesday, May 20, representatives from FedEx, DHL and United Technologies met with officials from the Ministry of the Environment and from Italy's Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC) to discuss the GOI's implementation of the EU Airport Noise Directive and its adherence to ICAO's balanced approach.

Ministry of the Environment

[1](#)3. (U) Participants:

Nazzareno Penna, Director, Office of Acoustic Pollution
Lucio De Carolis, Technical Expert on Noise Pollution
Darcy Nicolle, United Technologies
Ralph Carter, FedEx
Morgan Foulkes, DHL
David Mullenex, Science Counselor
Jessamyn Allen, Economic Officer
David Reimer, Consulate Milan

[1](#)4. (SBU) In contrast with our March meeting (Ref B), Penna appeared amicable and familiar with both the ICAO balanced approach and the EU Directive on airport noise, often quoting parts of the EU Directive to the group in support of his statements. At the same time, Penna expressed his belief that the four elements (1) reduction of noise at source; (2) land use planning and management; (3) operating procedure, and (4) operating restrictions, were not/not listed in priority order. While stating that there were no plans at present to ban night flights in Italy (a change from his previous statements), Penna reminded us that his constituents were the environment and the Italian people and not industry or airports.

[1](#)5. (SBU) After the industry group walked Penna through UK and French airport noise studies, he said that he was open to a dialogue with industry and explained that it might also be useful for the industry team to meet with the appropriate parties at the local level, including the airport committees and the twenty-one regional agencies of Italy's Environmental Protection Agency (APAT). While supporting discussions at the local level, he underscored with us that his office made the final decision nationally on implementing the EU Directive.

Italy's Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC)

[1](#)6. (U) Participants:

Alessandro Cardi, Head of Regulation Service
Franco Conte, Airport Planning
Enrico Deodati, Office of Airport Coordination
Darcy Nicolle, United Technologies
Ralph Carter, FedEx
Morgan Foulkes, DHL
Jessamyn Allen, Economic Officer

[1](#)7. (SBU) As expected, ENAC officials expressed their support for ICAO's balanced approach and explained that they were still working on having the jurisdiction for implementing the EU Directive moved to the Ministry of Transportation, or at the least, giving the MOT an advisory

role in the process. (NOTE: We were informed several days later that the Ministry of Transportation (and thus ENAC) had

been granted this advisory role and would begin to work with the Ministry of the Environment on the implementation of the EU Directive. End Note.)

18. (U) During the meeting, ENAC officials explained the system of noise zones around the airports and told us that that airport noise studies are being conducted at all Italian airports with potential noise pollution problems. At the end of the meeting, ENAC officials presented us with a copy of a Presidential Decree of 1999 banning night flights between 2300 and 0600. Several days later Cardi called to explain that this decree had been annulled and was not in effect as had previously been thought.

19. (SBU) Comment. There appears to be no imminent threat of a GOI ban on night flights in Italy. Moreover, with the Ministry of Transportation now having the authority to advise the Ministry of the Environment on the implementation of the EU Airport Noise Directive, the GOI is more likely to adhere to a balanced approach. Embassy will monitor this issue closely and continue urging the GOI to avoid operating restrictions as a measure of first resort to control noise levels at airports. End Comment.

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